

Our Reference      North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 26–109

**North East and North Cumbria ICB**  
Pemberton House  
Colima Avenue  
Sunderland Enterprise Park  
Sunderland  
SR5 3XB

Tel: 0191 512 8484  
E-mail: [nencicb.foi@nhs.net](mailto:nencicb.foi@nhs.net)

By Email

17 June 2026

Dear Applicant

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)**

Thank you for your request received on 4 June 2026 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Newcastle Gateshead, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley.

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

**Your Request**

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would be grateful if you could provide the following information relating to fertility services commissioned by your ICB during the following time periods, beginning 1st April 2023.

- 2023/24
- 2024/25
- 2025/26 (if available)

If you can't provide all the information, please provide anything you are able to. If some of the data will take more than 14 days to provide, we would be grateful if you could share in batches as it becomes available.

1. Has the ICB undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment relating to its fertility policy? Please provide a copy of the ICB's current fertility policy.
2. What was the average waiting time:
  - from GP referral to first fertility appointment?
  - from fertility clinic assessment to commencement of IVF/ICSI/IUI treatment?
3. What was the total spend on fertility services for those periods?
4. Please provide:

- the number of Individual Funding Requests (IFRs) relating to fertility treatment received for those periods;
  - the number approved,
  - the number declined,
  - and, where recorded, the primary reasons for declined requests.
5. Please list any specific services relating to male infertility that the ICB has commissioned, including diagnostic testing or sperm retrieval procedures.
  6. How many declined fertility-treatment IFRs were subsequently reconsidered, appealed, or overturned, and what were the principal reasons for the original decision being changed?
  7. For fertility-related IFRs please provide anonymised aggregate data showing approvals and declines by age, sex, ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation, relationship status, and family type (e.g. opposite-sex couple, same-sex couple, single person), where recorded.
  8. Please provide the number of staff hours or costs associated with administering fertility IFRs.
  9. Please share evidence/reporting of where/how you've modelled the impact of implementing the latest national fertility recommendations.
  10. Please provide copies of any Board papers discussing fertility service provision, affordability, or service restrictions.

If any part of this request is likely to exceed the appropriate cost limit, please advise how the request may be refined.

## Our Response

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB holds some of the information you have requested.

1. The ICB's fertility policy is available within the Value Based Clinical Commissioning Policy, v14 (pages 50-57, [icbp040-value-based-commissioning-policy-14.pdf](#)). The ICB is currently reviewing the fertility policy in conjunction with our providers in light of NICE NG257 ([Overview | Fertility problems: assessment and treatment | Guidance | NICE](#)) and as part of the process, we will be considering an Equality Impact Assessment to ensure that all aspects of the policy are evaluated thoroughly and inclusively.
2. We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB on this occasion is not able to provide the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm the ICB does not hold any of the information requested. However, we have determined that the information is held by the acute hospital NHS foundation trusts (FTs) within the North East and North Cumbria region.

In accordance with our duty under s.16 of the FOIA to provide reasonable advice and assistance to an individual requesting information, we have provided the FOI contacts for those foundation trusts.

| NENC Acute Hospital FTs              | Email/Online portal                                                        |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| County Durham and Darlington NHS FT  | <a href="mailto:cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net">cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs.net</a>     |
| Gateshead Health NHS FT              | <a href="mailto:ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net">ghnt.foi.enquiries@nhs.net</a> |
| North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS FT | <a href="mailto:foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk">foirequest@cumbria.nhs.uk</a>   |
| North Tees and Hartlepool NHS FT     | <a href="mailto:nth-tr.foi@nhs.net">nth-tr.foi@nhs.net</a>                 |
| Northumbria Healthcare NHS FT        | <a href="mailto:foi@northumbria.nhs.uk">foi@northumbria.nhs.uk</a>         |
| South Tees Hospitals NHS FT          | <a href="mailto:stees.foi.admin@nhs.net">stees.foi.admin@nhs.net</a>       |

|                                          |                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS FT     | <a href="mailto:stsft@infreemation.co.uk">stsft@infreemation.co.uk</a>                                          |
| The Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS FT | <a href="https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/">https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk/help/foi/</a> |

3. The total spend on fertility services for those periods:

| Financial Year | Total spend on fertility |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| 2023/24        | £4,051k                  |
| 2024/25        | £3,888k                  |
| 2025/26        | £3,175k                  |

The figures above are based on the costed activity delivered in 2025/26 against a speciality of fertility or IVF, as opposed to the value included within the block contract.

4. Details of funding requests relating to fertility treatment received are detailed in the table below. The primary reason for declined was criteria not met and clinical exceptionality had not been demonstrated.

| Financial Year | Requests received | Requests approved | Requests declined |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 2023/24        | 24                | 4                 | 20                |
| 2024/25        | 19                | 3                 | 16                |
| 2025/26        | 16                | 2                 | 14                |

5. Please refer to the response to question 2.
6. Over the timescale, nine declined cases were reconsidered, and no cases were approved after reconsideration.
7. For fertility-related IFRs, the table below shows anonymised aggregate data showing approvals and declines by age. The ICB does not hold information in relation to sex, ethnicity, disability status, sexual orientation, relationship status, and family type (e.g. opposite-sex couple, same-sex couple, single person), where recorded.

| Age | 2023/24  |          |       | 2024/25  |          |       | 2025/26  |          |       |
|-----|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|-------|----------|----------|-------|
|     | Approved | Declined | Total | Approved | Declined | Total | Approved | Declined | Total |
| 27  | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 1        | 1     | 0        | 1        | 1     |
| 28  | 0        | 3        | 3     | 0        | 1        | 1     | 0        | 1        | 1     |
| 30  | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     |
| 31  | 0        | 3        | 3     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 32  | 1        | 1        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     |
| 33  | 1        | 0        | 1     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 34  | 1        | 1        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     |
| 35  | 1        | 3        | 4     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 36  | 0        | 1        | 1     | 0        | 2        | 2     | 0        | 2        | 2     |
| 37  | -        | -        | -     | 1        | 2        | 3     | 1        | 2        | 3     |
| 38  | 0        | 1        | 1     | 1        | 1        | 2     | 1        | 1        | 2     |
| 40  | 0        | 1        | 1     | 1        | 1        | 2     | 1        | 1        | 2     |
| 41  | 0        | 1        | 1     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 42  | 0        | 1        | 1     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 43  | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     | -        | -        | -     |
| 44  | -        | -        | -     | 0        | 1        | 1     | 0        | 1        | 1     |
| 45  | -        | -        | -     | 0        | 1        | 1     | 0        | 1        | 1     |

8. On this occasion it is not possible to provide the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm the ICB

does not hold any of the information requested. NENC ICB is not able to quantify staff hours and costs associated with administering fertility IFRs at this level.

9. Please refer to the response to question 1.

10. The Commissioning Intent draft report to the board meeting held 25 November 2025 discussed a review and implementation or a revised In-Vitro Fertilisation Commissioning Policy. The link is [item-16a-draft-nenc-2627-outline-commissioning-intent-final.pdf](#). In accordance with s.21 of the FOIA, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.

In accordance with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to the Information Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the ICB's complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours faithfully

*Information Governance Support Officer*

**Information Governance Support Officer  
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**